



Mercy Health  
Care first

## ***Your important health information***

# **Urinary catheter care at home**

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You have been told by your doctor that you need to go home with your urinary catheter remaining in place for a short period of time.

## **How to care for your catheter**

- Wash the area around the catheter with soap and water twice a day using a front to back motion. Careful cleaning can reduce irritation and the chance of infection.
- Do not use powders or lotions around the catheter area. Do not tug or pull on the urinary catheter and regularly check that urine is draining into the bag.
- Drink plenty of fluids, 6 to 8 glasses each day.

## **How to care for your drainage bag**

### **During the day:**

- your nurse will connect a small urine drainage bag (leg bag) to your catheter and show you how this fastens to your thigh using the elastic straps
- this is worn during the day and is not seen under clothing. It is important that the leg bag does not drag and pull on the catheter.
- the leg bag holds approximately 350mls and must be emptied at least every 3 to 4 hours or more often if needed
- to empty the bag, first wash your hands. Turn the tap of the drainage outlet open and drain the urine into the toilet
- after the urine has drained completely turn the outlet tap to the closed position and dry the end of the catheter with a tissue if necessary. Wash your hands again.

### **At bedtime:**

- before you go to bed you need to attach your leg bag to a larger night drainage bag. This holds more urine and means that you will not have to empty it during the night
- once the night bag is connected the day bag outlet tap is turned to open to allow urine to drain. When you get into bed ensure that the tubing doesn't kink or loop and stop drainage
- keep the night drainage bag below your bladder level. The bag can rest on the floor or be taped to the side of the bed.

- in the morning the night bag is disconnected and the day bag outlet tap is turned off. The night bag is emptied of urine in the same way as the leg bag
- once emptied the night bag should be rinsed and washed with soap (dishwashing liquid) and water. Rinse again and hang the bag to dry ready to be used again.

### **If you have any of these problems:**

- raised temperature or fever
- lower back or abdominal pain
- no drainage of urine
- cloudy and smelly urine
- blood in the urine
- the catheter falls out or leaks.

### **Seek immediate help from:**

- your general practitioner (GP)
- or
- NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 60 60 24.

### **In an emergency:**

- call 000 for an ambulance
- or
- go to your nearest emergency department.

#### **Further Information**

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact:

- your general practitioner (GP)
- or
- NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 60 60 24

#### **Acknowledgements**

Produced by: Ward 6 MHW

Date produced: July 2014

Date of incidental review: February 2023

Date for review: May 2023